

CATHOLIC THEATRE

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President
Therese Marie Cuny

Secretarial Office
2644 Lawndale Avenue
Evanston, Illinois

Vice-President
Sister M. Angelita B.V.M.

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CATHOLIC THEATRE ABROAD

By Hugh Dickinson
Loyola University
Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Dickinson has contributed to the columns of CATHOLIC THEATRE in the past. It was through his interest and concern that the excellent article on the Marian Apostolate was made available (April, 1955). His views are the result of wide experience as a director and astute analysis of theatrical trends and characteristics.

The article is longer than those usually featured in our columns. Its value however, prompts us to suspend policy and publish it in its entirety.

The International Congress of the Religious Theatre will hold its third bi-ennial meeting next summer in Einsiedeln, Switzerland. If you are lucky enough to be touring Europe at the time, you should make a special effort to attend it. For it will be an international drama festival, with plays staged by school and parish groups chosen from Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany, and French Canada. It will also be a series of addresses and conferences which, but for the profusion of tongues, might well make you think you are attending a convention of the Catholic Theatre Conference or the American Educational Theatre Association.

You will find both interesting and instructive the similarities and contrasts between educational and religious theatre in the Old World and the New. It should hearten you greatly to learn, as you will, that European workers in non-professional theatre must cope with many problems similar to ours — not the least of which are growing pains. And, finally, it should increase and deepen the meaning of your work to discover, as you will, that it is part of a movement potentially world-wide.

This is evident from the conclusions reached at the second International Congress, held August 12-17, 1953, in Bruges, Belgium. These have recently been published in full in *De Graal*, the bi-lingual magazine edited by the Rev. Jozef Boon, C.S.S.R., that provides not only a general review of the Catholic theatre movement in Europe and a valuable photographic record of notable productions, but also an international exchange of views.

(Continued on page nine)

The following address given by Brother Roger Celestine, F.S.C. chairman of the Archdiocesan Dramatics Council Festival of 1953 (Los Angeles) offers many interesting thoughts on Festival participation at this time when so many are similarly engaged. We believe you will agree that it deserves a larger audience — that of all of our readers.

At the opening of this festival we ought to ask ourselves, this question: "Why are we meeting here to produce plays? Why not present them at our own schools — and be done with it?"

In answer we might advance many good reasons. The advantages are worthwhile and sound.

Catholic schools, thus banded together in producing our plays, give a united proof that our culture includes in a real sense a keen interest in the art of drama, and that we will keep this interest ever alive.

We meet here more easily to appreciate and enjoy one another's efforts, which would otherwise be much more difficult. We share in the great accomplishment of seeing value in the work of others and enjoy it without the sting of jealousy.

We come here to learn from one another . . . to be stimulated by the enthusiasm, and, perhaps, to learn better techniques of other entrants.

We are here to produce our plays under the scrutiny of critics and judges so that we may profit by their enlightening evaluations, and thus be moved to set our aims yet higher.

The very fact that we have entered this festival has demanded much of us in the preparation. And this in itself has been of immense value. This preparation has caused us to delve into dramatic literature which might otherwise have remained a closed book to us. We have had to search for plays — and thus we have been lead to read them. And, no doubt, we have also read works concerning the technical side of the theater.

Because we knew that we must act at our best we have engaged in a more intense study of dramatics. We have learned to value team-work — the sacrificing of our own selves for the common goal of the group. Then, too, the preparation for the play has been a self-discipline calling for hours of intensive

(Continued on next page)

drilling, rehearsal and planning.

It is difficult and almost impossible to estimate the total value of such a preparation to a person who has entered the Festival. I am sure that we may say that his personality has grown much richer for such an experience, and that the horizon of his culture has been extended immeasurably.

Our program bears the title "Festival." We have purposefully avoided the words "tournament" or "contest" for sound reasons. The word "festival" in its large sense means a happy and joyous occasion, a time for celebrating a happy event. This is what we want these two days to be — a joyous occasion. We must avoid the anxiety of fearing to lose to others or to be bettered by them. This would take the joy out of what should be a happy time. If we must look at the Festival as a contest, let it be mainly a contest with our own selves. It is proper that we should want to better ourselves. If we do better than others, that is incidental.

OUR APOLOGIES

Not once, but twice did our pen fumble in making up last month's issue. The name of Mr. William J. Elsen, Head of Department of Speech at Notre Dame University, was omitted from the listing of the Program Committee. Mr. Elsen is a very active member of this group and has contributed generously to its progress.

Sister M. Annella, O.S.B. head of the Drama Department of College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota, whose name was listed on the exhibit committee is actually Chairman of this committee. Changes necessitated by a crowded schedule and other pressing activities caused the change in chairmanship. Sister Annella has long been active in the North Central Region and her appointment deserves recognition.

STUDENT - MEMBERSHIP

Our teensters are certainly not taking a back seat. At the present date — and memberships are still coming in — they have not only topped last year's high rate but exceeded it by a large number. Almost 1400 high school students are carrying membership cards and proudly wearing their St. Genesius Medals. College students, too, are showing greater response during this second year of student membership, and each mail brings new lists. Their awareness of the importance of wedding theatre to their Catholic faith and of affiliating themselves with this important work is a compliment to the Catholic action-mindedness of their directors.

WE SALUTE!

In 1940, an enterprising young man, Paul Lilly, conceived the idea of a city-wide Catholic Theatre. After securing the approval of Archbishop Mooney and arranging for a first meeting in the Chancery building, announcement was made through the diocesan paper. Approximately 300 responded, a Board was appointed by Father E. Hannick who was named Moderator, plans were discussed, and The Catholic Theatre of Detroit was born.

This is the 15th year of activity — a milestone of which all those Detroiters have reason to be proud. Their record includes adult theatre, children's theatre, radio shows, television shows, variety programs for clubs and church groups, class work, touring shows, and participation in civic celebrations.

Some names stand out in reminiscence. Many of us remember the magnetism and the enthusiasm of Paul Lilly who at present is seen frequently on TV and in summer stock. Margaret Passmore, who contributed greatly to the organization and development of the Children's theatre, will be remembered as the efficient and hard-working secretary of CTC not too long ago. Frank Wurtsmith, second president of the Theatre who is now holding a position with Station WWJ-TV. Nap Sanchez too, moved from the presidency into professional TV in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The list could go on, including many who have "made good" in professional theatre, radio and TV. But more important, each contributed to a movement which has given unmeasured benefit, and entertainment to the city of Detroit.

The present president, Miss Nellie Passmore, is continuing in the tradition of the past. It seems significant that their last advertised program, closing the Marian Year, is the dramatization of the Five Glorious Mysteries. A glorious note for a glorious occasion!

Catholic Theatre Conference extends warm congratulations to the Catholic Theatre of Detroit and the hope that the next fifteen years may be productive of further glory in His name.

At our request, Mr. Masami Ota of the Japanese Embassy has sent us a limited number of booklets on KABUKI THEATRE. These are beautifully illustrated and explain in detail the significance and procedure of this type of stage presentation popular in Japan, and recently on tour in the United States. Members who are interested in securing a copy are asked to send in a card and we'll mail copies until the supply is depleted.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Perhaps it's different in other cities and towns, but here in Chicago the advent of Christmas has been evident for some time now by the decorations, parades and Christmas shopping suggestions. Many of us shudder at the commercialization — rushing the season in an attempt to drain every last dollar from the shopper's pockets. The carols are sung so repetitiously that it takes all the shine and freshness from them when the Day really arrives. Maybe merchants have more than just a point there, however. They recognize — perhaps more than we — how easily men's hearts are touched by the Christmas story, and where business uses that fact for commercial gain, why can't we utilize it for a spiritual gain? How? Christ's birth is merely the beginning of a limitless supply of spiritual sustenance that we inherited. How much of that fund of spiritual energy and motivation do we bring to our stages? How much do we activate our players with the desire to do well, — not merely for the sake of doing well, but because the stage that is consecrated to His service becomes almost as sacred and powerful as an altar. Indeed, it seems symbolic that the shape of the stage is the rectangular one that the early Greeks used when the focal point on their stage was the altar.

As the years unfold, Christmas tinsel and the froth and excitement all lose their glitter but we find beneath that which is more substantial. We find, in the core of Christmas, the realization that we are children of destiny, singled out to carry on the story of His love and to do His work. For us in the theatre, therefore, that realization has a special significance. It serves to remind us that our inspiration must come always from the greatest drama of all time — the drama which began in a humble cave and gloriously ended in the broken tomb of Easter Sunday.

To each one of us then, a deeply joyful Christmas! May His love inspire and guide us in our efforts to bring Christ into the spotlight of the world.

FAMILY THEATRE

Are you dialing in on the Family Theatre Program each Wednesday? Unless you are, you're missing some effective work in radio coupled with well-written Catholic material. These weekly broadcasts coming over the Mutual Network at 9:30 p.m. EST are interesting in story, and the background music, composed and conducted by Joseph Zimmerman, does much to give finish to the production. The names of prominent stage and screen stars in the title roles serve, not only to publicize the program but to make each broadcast one that is highly artistic in acting and presentation.

FESTIVAL NEWS

On December 4th and 5th the Southern Pacific Region again produces a One-Act Play Festival at Los Angeles. The Festival will be held at Immaculate Heart College. Early plans indicate even greater enthusiasm and participation than in previous years.

* * * *

The Play Festival for Catholic Schools of South Dakota was held at St. Paul's Indian Mission at Marty, South Dakota on November 11. Father Jerome Palmer, O.S.B. served as Critic-Judge to the 7 participating groups.

The program, in order of performance, included:

St. Paul's High School (Marty)
CUSTER'S LAST STAND
Director: Father Roger, O.S.B.

Notre Dame Academy (Mitchell)
THE CHARM RACKET
Director: Sister M. Gonzaga

Mount Marty High School
IDOLS
Director: Sister M. Jeanne, O.S.B.

Cathedral High School (Sioux Falls)
THE WILL
Director: Sister M. Matthew, O.P.

Immaculate Conception Academy (Stephan)
THE HAPPY JOURNEY
Director: Sister M. Audrey, O.S.B.

St. Martin's Academy (Sturgis)
MOONCALF MUGFORD
Director: Miss M. R. Sennett

St. Agatha High School (Howard)
I SHALL BE WAITING
Director: Sister M. Loyola, O.S.F.

REGIONAL NEWS

The October issue of THE GENESIAN, published by the West Central Region was almost bursting at the staples with its generous supply of news-items and activities of that area.

The St. Louis Local Play Festival, one of its major events, will be held December 3 and 4. The winning play will then be produced at the Regional Convention in the Spring.

In Kansas City, in early October, Sister Roberta, O.S.U. of St. Agnes High School conducted a meeting to further plans for CTC for the coming year.

In Oklahoma City, a similar meeting was held and an election of local officers was held.

All efforts are being directed toward the Regional Convention which is scheduled for March 18, 19 and 20, 1955. The present enthusiasm and organized effort gives promise of success.

CLARKE COLLEGE ARENA WORKSHOP

On November 6, Clarke College held an ARENA WORKSHOP for high school students. The keynote address was given by Sister M. Leola, B.V.M., well known as a Theatre consultant.

This was followed by a panel discussion on Arena Theatre Production problems by the Production classes of Clarke College. Senior Drama Majors then gave a demonstration of acting techniques used in Arena. The highlight of the day was the presentation of BLITHE SPIRIT in arena style, which was directed by Mr. J. Napiecinski who later, led a discussion of the play.

A coke-dance closed the program, pleasantly ending a day of marked value and benefit for the many who attended. We congratulate Sister M. Xavier, B.V.M. head of the department, for her educative plans in this program and the contribution it offered to the students of the area.

NEW PLAY

There have been several inquiries about THE RIGHTEOUS ARE BOLD. This play was written by Frank Carney and published by Duffy, Ltd. in Dublin.

CHANGES IN LIBRARY STAFF

We are sorry to report that Sister Mary Ruth of Immaculate Heart College (Los Angeles) has been missioned elsewhere and will no longer be acting as librarian for the Conference. Throughout the past several years Sister's efforts and cooperation have made our library service possible. Few realize the detail and the effort involved in this work which was assumed along with regular duties. The many letters, however, which have complimented us on prompt and efficient service are testimony to her service.

The Conference stands greatly indebted to Sister. Our good wishes go with her in her new field and the prayer that St. Genesius may bless her richly for her generous service to CTC.

At the same time we extend greetings to Moira Niblo who has already taken over the duties of Conference librarian and in so efficient a way that service has continued with no break whatever.

Requests for plays should continue to be addressed to the Catholic Theatre Conference Library at 2070 Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles, California.

Erroneously, the name THURSDAYS AT HOME was given our reporter as the name of Alvernia's production for the Chicago Drama Festival. The play was THURSDAY PASSAGE. Anna Helen Reuter was director.

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HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE

MOTHER KNEW BEST

(Carole Ann Butz and Barbara Gormley,
Academy of Our Lady (Longwood), Chicago)

We had come to the Drury Lane Summer Theater greatly excited about the prospect of having an appointment with the famous Miss ZaSu Pitts.

The small room in which we found ourselves had a mirrored dressing table which was cluttered with every kind of theatrical makeup. Miss Pitts, wearing the costume of her role as the spinster in *MISS PRIVATE EYE*, graciously motioned us to come in and have a chair.

She told us of her early desire to take up nursing as a career and of her mother's conflicting ambition for her to become an actress.

Under her mother's influence, she went to Hollywood where she made the usual round of the casting offices until at last a friend obtained the small part of "Becky" for her in Mary Pickford's *LITTLE PRINCESS*. From this she graduated to other roles with Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplain, and Barbara Le Marr.

We asked Miss Pitts if she didn't miss the reaction of an audience when making pictures. She smilingly announced that after 30 years of acting only in movies, she felt more at home before the cameras than before an audience.

College education is something this actress considers essential to any young person interested in making a career of acting. It is her belief that it takes not only talent, but also a good education and plenty of hard work to gain the top in any field.

When asked her favorite role she just smiled. "So many people have asked me that question," she said. "How can I answer when I've been in over 300 parts in movies alone." We were impressed at this record which ranged from early silent picture roles to the latest movies and TV films.

Home, to ZaSu, is Bretwood Hts., California where she lives with her husband. She has two grown children and two small grandchildren. After years of tremendous success in show business, Miss Pitts has to admit that mother knew best.

If you wait until you don your costume to get into character, you will never portray anyone but yourself in a costume.

RECIPE FOR LITTLE THEATRE

by Lois Perry Wilson

Take seventy people and work them hard for two thousand hours. These people can include anyone in the community who has any of the following requirements: bakes cakes, follows a script, turns up hems, likes rummage sales, adores antique shops, has a station wagon; likes to hammer, saw, paint, use a typewriter, fuss with wiring systems; is a little bit crazy, likes to act, doesn't like to act, likes little theatre, prefers the professional stage, has had lots of theatre experience.

Starting several months before the opening night performance, lose lots of sleep, neglect your friends, your family; laugh a lot, make some friends, decide to give the thing up, decide to stick with it; learn something about the skills and arts which go into play production, fall in love with the theatre, develop an aversion to footlights and greasepaint.

If you are a director, learn to speak softly, develop a good shout, and take the rest cure when it's all over.

If you are a member of the cast, learn your lines quickly, don't learn your lines quickly, find something to fuss about with the backstage crew, learn to get along with people.

If you are a member of the backstage crew, do your work well, don't do it well, find something to fuss about with at least one member of the cast.

Mix all these ingredients until dress rehearsal, at which time the auditorium will be the department of utter confusion. Have a successful first night, give some benefits, clip the reviews out of the newspapers, place them in your scrapbook, take a good long rest.

Do this four times a year.

Marilee Young, a junior at Academy of Our Lady (Longwood, Chicago) acted as understudy for Margaret O'Brien in her recent performance of *JENNY KISSED ME* at the Drury Lane Theatre. Donna Sullivan, also of the Academy, played a minor role in the production. Making offstage appearances with Miss O'Brien as well as lunching and dining with her has given the girls a memorable experience.

HIGH SCHOOL WORK SHOPS

The Dauphin Players of St. Louis University High School have an active and unusually well organized program. Their newest and most noteworthy project is a series of workshops held after school each night to train younger members and understudies. There is a workshop in basic acting which is currently working with Franklin's REHEARSAL under the direction of Dave Farrell who won the Best Actor award last year. Other workshops include make-up, stage design and construction.

These basic courses last six weeks and then give way to other workshops — directing, advanced acting, and history of the theatre. At the end of the year all workshops culminate in an intra-mural one-act play contest, entirely student-directed and student-produced.

Quentin Quesnell, S.J., is the director of this ambitious and progressive group.

CHRISTMAS SEALS

It isn't too late to send for those Christmas seals. Response up to date indicates that most of the students are aware of the help they offer the Conference through this project, as well as the fact that they can make some pin-money for themselves. If you've been worrying about the money to make that Notre Dame Convention more than just a dream — this can certainly provide the answer. For each sheet of 100 seals (1c per seal) that you sell, you return 70c to the CTC and the remaining 30c is yours. You'll also be helping to put Christ back into Christmas by promoting the use of these seals. Just one seal sold to each student of your school and you'll be surprised at the sum that can be contributed to the work of the Conference.

But don't delay. Your order cannot be filled if received after December 20. Send in the blank below at once. Returns need not be made until January 18th. Do not send money, send check or money order deducting 30 cents for every page of 100 that you sell.

Please send me sheets of stamps.
I will give my director the \$..... due the
Conference before January 5, 1955.

Signed

Name

Address

City and State

School

School Address and City

HIGH SCHOOL

● **FIFTY MARIAN YEARS**, presented at St. Mary's Academy (Milwaukee) in early November, marked the golden jubilee of the school. There were six presentations of the pageant, directed by Sister M. Veronice, O.S.F. **STAR PLAYER**, a one-act play, was another production during the month of November.

On December 19th they will present **COME LET US ADORE HIM** and on December 20 the one-act play, **ELOISE DANCES**.

● **Genesian Masque**, the new Dramatic Club of Notre Dame High School (Belleville, Illinois), produced an Oriental fantasy in the early part of the school year. Another oriental play **GOOSEBERRY MANDARIN** is scheduled for December. The group will also participate in the St. Louis Local Play Festival. Sister Mary Eda, S.S.N.D. is director.

● At Loretto Academy (Kansas City, Missouri), Sister Marita, S.L. chose **SONG OF BERNADETTE** for their opening production. A Christmas pageant, choral, and pantomime will mark December in the Drama department.

● The DuBuorgian Footlights Club of Bishop DuBuorg High School (St. Louis) under the direction of Sister M. Celestine, C.P.P.S. will participate in the St. Louis Local Play Festival. In mid-November a play festival was held in the school.

● **OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY** took over the stage at Rosati-Kain High School (St. Louis) in mid-November. The three performances were directed by Sister M. Jeanninne, S.S.N.D.

● An original pageant entitled **THE SPLENDID GLEAM** was the Marian Year offering of the Queen's Players of Catholic High School (Oklahoma City). Sister M. Immaculata, O.S.B. directed the production.

● The 83 girls of the Immaculata Players (Immaculate Conception Academy, Dubuque) who are members of CTC held their second meeting of the year to study the official publication of the Conference. Seniors were in charge of original skits and interpretive dancing which formed part of the study hour.

For the Christmas program the Choral Club will present **A CHRISTMAS TRIPTYCH**, a Cantata-Pageant by Denise Mainville. The drama club will do the pantomime and the choral reading of the production. The Cantata is under the direction of Sister M. Raban, O.S.F. voice instructor at the Academy. Sister M. Generose is the Drama director.

● St. Joseph's Academy (Wheeling, W. Va.) presented Robert Smett's Choric Poem for Marian Year in early December. Sister M. Immaculate is the director.

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Send All
High School News Items
to
Anna Helen Reuter
1050 W. Ardmore Ave.
Chicago 40, Ill.

CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT

(HIGH SCHOOL Continued)

● **THE ANNIVERSARY WALTZ** was the theme and title for "Fashions in three-quarters time" at Immaculate Conception Academy (Davenport, Iowa) in late October. A cast of about 50 made up the program which opened on a 1904 picture and terminated with a wedding party in 1954. Sister M. Angelita, B.V.M. was director of the production.

● The stage of McDonell Memorial High School (Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin) was converted into the lovely blue and white room of **QUALITY STREET** in early November. Barrie's quaintly charming comedy was directed by Sister M. Susan, S.S.N.D.

● **GREAT AUNT TRILBY** gave audiences a pleasant evening at Notre Dame High School (Los Angeles) November 13 and 14. Written and directed by Brother Dunstan, C.S.C., this production exudes fun even between the lines of the program. "A Word About The Play" as a foreward invites further curiosity and interest in this script which Brother Dunstan describes as a "pleasant insult" (to the intelligence of audience) but one which amuses rather than incenses the audience. The hep-cat-lingo must have brought many more teen-age recruits to Brother's group of admirers. And even those of us who prefer "meaty Drama" recognize the value of a "satirical murder mystery" when it helps the teensters to laugh at it and with it and to evaluate types of comedy while having a little fun.

● St. Joseph Academy Genesian Players (St. Paul, Minnesota) gaily opened the '53-'54 season with **MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS**. The double cast production in which boys from Cretin High School played male roles, took place in late October under the direction of Sister Irenaeus.

On December 2, preceding initiation of Juniors into Drama Club and the reception of medals, the Seniors staged **UNDERTOW** and **DID YOU SAY MINK**.

On November 20 the Players gave **MENFOLK** for the Drama Festival at Cretin High School.

On November 19 and 21 the Drama department in combination with the Music department presented **LIVING WITH MARY** an original script as a Marian Year offering.

The Christmas season will be marked by **CANTICLE OF THE NATIVITY** to take place on December 22.

● Senior class of St. Augustine High School (Austin, Minnesota) presented Thornton Wilder's **OUR TOWN** on November 22. Sister M. Baylon is the director.

● The Verse Choir of Immaculata High School (Chicago) presents Charles Tazewell's **LULLABY OF CHRISTMAS** on December 14. Anna Helen Reuter is director.

● **VENITE ADOREMUS** has been chosen by Holy Angels Academy (Minneapolis) for their December 19 presentation. Sister M. Charitas will direct the production.

● St. Francis High School (Sacramento, California) will present tableaux of the Nativity as a final program before the holidays. Sister M. Teresina, O.S.F. directs the presentation.

● Cascia Hall Preparatory School (Tulsa, Oklahoma) has adapted a constitution and taken the name Belle Masque Society. Their moderator, Rev. A. J. LaFleur, O.S.A. has done much work with theatre-in-the-round productions at the school. Recent one-acts presented include **THE MIST** and **THE GREAT WESTERN MELODRAMA**.

● The Thespians of Our Lady of Mercy High School (Detroit, Michigan) are currently working on scenes from Sharkey's **THE WOMAN WHO CONQUERED**. Under the direction of Sister M. Laurentina, the group presented the Verse Choir arrangement of **A SPRIG OF MIGNONETTE**.

* * *

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

● College of St. Catherine (St. Paul, Minnesota) presented **THE CURIOUS SAVAGE** on November 22 and 23. On December 10, 11 and 12 they will open the curtain on **THE NUTCRACKER OF NUREMBERG** which has been selected as the children's theatre play for the holiday season. Miss Mabel Frey is director.

● From December 3 til December 18, **RICHARD III** will dominate the stage at Catholic University of America.

● Ghéon's **CHRISTMAS ON THE VILLAGE SQUARE** will take the spotlight at St. Benedict's College (Atchison, Kansas). Rev. Bede J. Bradley, O.S.B. is director.

● Creighton University's (Omaha, Nebraska) program for the year includes **PAPA IS ALL**, **FINIAN'S RAINBOW**, **MEDEA** and **MRS. McTHING**. Dean Graunke is director.

● **THE BARBER OF SEVILLE** was the opening production of Marymount College (Salina, Kansas). Their Christmas program will be **THE CHRISTMAS TRIPTYCH**, a cantata, directed by Sister Michael Ann.

● In mid-October, Mount St. Scholastica (Atchison, Kansas) presented **JANUARY THAW**. Sister Mary Janice, O.S.B. directed the play.

● Under the direction of Mrs. Elvira Bujarski, the Sacred Heart College Players of Wichita produced **ABRAHAM AND ISAAC**, a mystery play.

(COLLEGE and UNIVERSITY Continued)

- A cutting from **THE HAIRY APE** was an early-in-the year presentation at Immaculate Heart College (Los Angeles).

In October, a program combining **PEGUY** poetry and interpretative dance was staged by two members of the Jongleurs.

THE COCKTAIL PARTY is currently in rehearsal while the new farce **SEVEN NUNS AT LAS VEGAS** will be presented for the Drama Festival on December 5 and again for the public during that same week. Joseph Rice directs the **JONGLEURS**.

- **LA POSADO** (Shelter For a Wanderer) will be the Christmas presentation of the Campus Players of St. Mary-of-the-Wasatch (Salt Lake City). Sister M. Philip directs the production.

- Shakespeare's **LOVE'S LABOUR LOST** was presented by the Rosary College Players on November 19 and 21. Mr. F. Thompson was the director.

- **LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CURTAIN GUILD** (Chicago) presents **KING OEDIPUS** on December 10 and 12. Mr. Hugh Dickinson is director.

- The first major production of the year for Mount Marty College (Yankton, South Dakota) was **THE GRASS HARP**. The three performances, using arena staging, were presented November 14, 15, and 16 and directed by Sister M. Jeannette.

Mount Marty is one of those to-be-envied colleges with a new auditorium "on the way up." Sister tells us that building is progressing and the new theatre taking shape.

- Mundelein College (Chicago) opened the year's program with Shakespeare's **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING** on November 19 and 20. Mr. David Itkin directed the double-cast production.

- Columbine's (St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana) first activity of the year was the 18th Annual Play Tournament on November 4. Each class presented 18th century British comedy cuttings. The freshmen chose a scene from **THE RIVALS**; sophomores, **SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL**; juniors, **THE CRITIC**; and seniors, **SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER**. Judges were Ted Doyle, Frederick Syburg, (both of Notre Dame University) and Mrs. Joseph McGuire.

Gheon's play **CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE** has been selected as the Columbine's December presentation. Natalie White is director.

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

- College of St. Teresa (Kansas City, Missouri) has just closed curtains on **THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER**, their seventh annual children's play directed by Sister Mary Felice.

- **SANTA'S SPECTACLES** and **THE CHRISTMAS TREE ANGEL** will be combined on a program called **CHRISTMAS PACKAGE**, to be presented December 17, 18 and 19 by the Children's Educational Theatre of Maryland. Mrs. Frances Carey Bown will direct these productions at the Vagabond Theatre.

COMMUNITY THEATRE

- **CHARLEY'S AUNT** went on tour in November. The Catholic Theatre of Mobile carried the show to Rosinton, Alabama where it met with the same successful response given by the audiences of Mobile. Reverend Anthony Zoghby manages direction of the group along with his heavy program in the Chancery and Mission office.

NOEL FOR '54 the fifth annual Christmas Variety show will bow to audiences of Catholic Theatre of Mobile in mid-December. **DUST OF THE ROAD** by K. S. Goodman will also be a feature of the program.

- Between December 1 and Christmas, the Catholic Theatre of Rochester will take a holiday one-acter on the road in what they term "parish-circuit." Their schedule is filled. They have also been given unlimited time for a show on their local station WVET-TV on Christmas eve.

FROM ABROAD

Our mail has been assuming an international flavor lately. Cheshire, England; Baghdad, Iraq; Dublin, Ireland; Stockholm, Sweden and Bettiah, India have all found their way to our desk during the past month. The following letter from Sweden confirms the fact that the needs are the same everywhere.

Dear Sirs:

On behalf of the Marsyas Theatre of Stockholm in Sweden, the only Catholic scene in the whole of Scandinavia, I have the honor of writing to you.

We are very anxious to come into contact with other Catholic groups who could and would like to give us some help and information about their theatres. As Catholic plays are almost unknown in our part of the world, — Sweden being called "the stone quarry of Our Lord" — we would like very much to consult with you about plays and methods. Perhaps you could recommend some for us to translate and produce here in Stockholm. We in turn can reciprocate in like manner.

*Our theatre is in an old cellar in the old part of Stockholm and is quite beautiful. We are preparing **LA DIALOGUES DES CARMELITES** by Bernanos and some plays by Strindberg and — we hope soon — by Graham Greene.*

Maybe we, the Catholic theatres, can one day gain back what has been lost on the stage . . .

*Yours sincerely in Xto,
Jon Peter Wieselgren
Secretary of the Catholic Information
Beltgatan 3
Stockholm, Sweden*

(CATHOLIC THEATRE ABROAD Continued)

The religious theatre, according to the Congress, has made such strides that it is no longer a movement of minor importance, but one as solidly established as other types of theatre, and one, moreover, that draws its inspiration and vitality from a profounder view of life. Dr. Oskar Eberlé, the leading figure in the movement in German-speaking Switzerland, reported that this was evident in the indoor and open-air performances staged at Bruges: they showed great vigor and an unhackneyed variety of styles.

The Congress considered a daring possibility; namely, that the religious authority may, once again, come to welcome into Catholic churches in Europe performances of a paraliturgical nature:

"To what extent such representations will come to find a place within church walls will have to be decided on the following grounds: The liturgy is the sacramental rite, but we declare that in the new Office of Holy Saturday Night, new elements of religious dramaturgy have been welcome and integrated with more ancient ones. Other ceremonies useful to the Church may make their appearance, to be staged with due respect. It is, of course, solely up to the religious authority to pronounce upon such matters."

In this connection, the Congress noted that the actors in religious theatre have shown a pronounced tendency to return to the values which the Church extols, "seeking spiritual aid and support from Her, and rejoicing at the interest She has already shown in them."

A recurrent theme in the deliberations of the Congress was the need for a theatre where moral values are paramount; a theatre which will be, in the words of Pope Pius XII, "truthful and wholesome," and one conformable to Christian principles. To insure that the "virtus religionis" is a part of this theatre, it must deal, in part, with manifestations of the religious life: Christ, the saints, divine revelation, or the mysteries.

Looking back over half a century, the Congress felt keenly the loss of its forerunners, such as Henri Ghéon, Henri Brochet, and the Flemish People's Theatre, that had worked so intensely and set such high standards for the present movement to achieve.

An essential element in the movement, and one that may appear novel to us, is the idea of the missionary theatre; that is, the promotion by the Congress of the religious theatre in the mission fields. That theatre, it is believed, can flourish only if missionaries and stage-directors in mission countries encourage native populations to develop an indigenous theatre, with styles peculiar to their national and racial character. Ultimately, then, that theatre must develop an original body of drama written by native playwrights for native actors.

But, since it is still too soon for that, missionaries continue to look to their homelands for the plays they use. They should be supplied, said the Congress, with plays of proven merit. But even this stop-gap repertory will fail of its purpose unless men who know the mission fields are free to adapt the plays to suit their native audiences.

More familiar to us is the problem of the place of the dramatic arts in schools and colleges. The lead-

ers of the religious theatre say this problem has become more apparent — and more acute — as the movement itself has grown. But however old a problem it may be to us, our solution represents a radical innovation for them.

Theatrical training in Europe has traditionally been the province of the conservatories and institutes — professional schools entirely independent of colleges and secondary schools. It was very significant news, therefore, when the ancient and respected University of Louvain opened a department of speech and drama last winter. Its first chairman, Dr. Sobry, died unexpectedly; but his work is being carried on by M. Florquin.

Theatre has long had, of course, an extra-curricular place in European education, since the first Jesuit university productions in the middle of the Sixteenth Century. But the emphasis in European education has traditionally been centered on the training of the intellect, rather than on the cultivation of the sensibilities; and theatre has still to be recognized as a most important means of cultivating sensibility and to be given a formal position in the curriculum. To accomplish this, it was recommended that, beginning with primary grades, schools should introduce classes in narration and elocution — especially dramatic elocution, song, rhythm, design and stage production. The Belgian section of the Congress resolved that dramatics be given a definite place in the curriculum of the secondary schools, and held that all normal school candidates training for instruction at the primary and secondary levels be given a course in diction and dramatic art.

It is obvious, therefore, that the teachers themselves lack the training necessary to teach these disciplines effectively. The Congress was consistent in urging that, if dramatic arts are made a definite part of the teacher-training programs, such training should be given by professors who are specialists in the field. Consequently, universities must institute chairs of dramatic art and theatre practice.

A further point made was that conservatories and institutes should include training in religious theatre among the types they teach, to guarantee the Christian education of the young men and women enrolled in them.

Lastly, the Congress recognized that Catholic Action and the religious theatre are mutually beneficial; each, therefore, should work for the benefit of the other. Indeed, Catholic Action has always found parish dramatics an effective means of stirring up group enthusiasm. The religious theatre will benefit in like manner when it is imbued with the spirit of Catholic Action. This is especially true when it is a question of staging a mass religious spectacle requiring wide participation and depending on wide popular support. Catholic Action, in fact, becomes the leaven working unobtrusively in the dough to insure its success.

Such mass religious spectacles must be shown to be financially feasible. Otherwise, they may suffer the fate of the celebrated Flemish People's Theatre, which was ruined by lack of financial support. For the religious theatre exists, ultimately, for the good of the Christian community; it should become the work of the faithful, the more so if it involves great sacrifice.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIPS

Several inquiries lately request further information as to the difference between sustaining membership and group membership. Actually, sustaining members who pay \$25.00 a year receive no additional privileges over those of group members. The additional \$15.00 is a donation toward furtherance of Conference activity. Their generosity, we believe, deserves recognition and so we list below those who held such membership during the past year:

Joseph F. Rice, Los Angeles, California

Catholic Theatre Guild of Mobile, Alabama

Catholic Youth Council, Buffalo, New York

Family Theatre, Hollywood, California

Les Jongleurs de Notre Dame, Immaculate
Heart College, Los Angeles, California

St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, St. Mary-of-the-
Woods, Indiana

Props and Paints, College of New Rochelle,
New York

School of the Brown County Ursulines,
St. Martin, Ohio

Our Lady of the Angels Academy,
Clinton, Iowa

NEW TIME-SAVER IN STAGE MAKE-UP

The new product called LIQUID LATEX ADHESIVE is all that it claims to be — and more. Much has been said of the fact that beards, using this product as a base, can be used over again. However, a more important advantage, we believe, lies in the fact that the director (who must often be his own "make-up man") has the advantage of being able to make up these beards in advance. Instead of bringing the cast together hours before curtain time — essential if there are many and if make-up is to be a good job — the finished beards can be ready and waiting. For the high school director producing a play during the school day when excusing the cast from one class before curtain time is the most to hope for, this product is a real blessing. It is no exaggeration to say that it cuts make-up time in half. The product is sold by Paramount Enterprises, 242 West 27th Street, New York 1, N. Y.

PLAY WRITING

Classes at Academy of Our Lady (Chicago), aware of the need for training Catholic playwrights, radio and TV script-writers, recently launched four senior divisions in a contest that brought in 136 radio scripts, each to honor Mary in some phase of her life. While the Marian theme was the motivating force, many have gone on and done adaptations of stories, of longer plays and of poems, while others were original and some partly borrowed in the manner of DeWohl's books. The best will be chosen and then presented over the P.A. for the student body.



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PLAY PRODUCTION WORK SHEET

THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED

by

Vera and Ken Terpley

A modern dress comedy in three acts. Acts I and II have two scenes. Books, 85¢ each. Royalty for each performance, 15% of the gross receipts, with a maximum of \$25.00, and no minimum.

Published by: Row, Peterson and Company, 1911 Ridge Ave., Evanston, Illinois.

Nineteen characters are listed. Fifteen of these are major roles although five of them (women) appear only in Act II. All roles offer ample opportunity for fine characterization but must be clear cut and well defined, especially the women in Act II in the "ink blot" scene.

THE SETTING: As written the play demands a single set but of a "duplex" nature. Both the outside and the inside of the set must be visible and acted in simultaneously. This offers opportunity for the expression of originality and ingenuity in set design.

THE STORY: Briefly, the story illustrates the truth that a little learning is sometimes a dangerous thing ---- all, however, in a highly humorous vein. The cause of it all is Laurie Huntington, a college sophomore majoring in psychology. Using all the techniques of the psychologist---jumble-blocks, ink blots, word association tests, etc. --- she soon has her family and the whole neighborhood in a state of excitement and confusion.

STYLE OF PRODUCTION: The beauty of THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED is that it offers wonderful opportunity for originality of production. Most presentations of this play have followed the original production. However, since the action demands a "double" set which in itself is not realistic, we decided to go all the way and did our production in a stylized technique with expressionistic features. Our set consisted of an "L" shaped platform backed by a sky cyc. The base of the "L" represented the porch and the stem represented (together with the down stage area) the inside of the house. A huge thermometer, supported by stylized dogs was mounted on the plat, a stylized door frame served as the entrance to the house and the furniture was limited to a coffee table and two benches.

REMARKS: Stylizing the play strips it of all non essentials, emphasizes the plot and highlights the circumstances and situations. It gives the actors room to act but demands a broad and vigorous interpretation. Music, dancing and flexible lighting can be used extensively. A detailed discussion of our production was published in LAGNIAPPE, Vol. 23, No. 3 and can be obtained by writing ROW, PETERSON AND CO. The play is well worth consideration.

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A further description of the production of the play is given in the following pages. The production of the play is described in the following pages.

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REMARKS: The production of the play is described in the following pages. The production of the play is described in the following pages.

THE WELCOME MAT

Academy of Notre Dame
Belleville, Illinois
Sister M. Eda

I.C.A. Drama Group
Oldenberg, Indiana

Sacred Heart Academy
Wichita, Kansas
Mrs. Cecelia Beardsley

St. Agnes High School
Kansas City, Kansas
Sister M. Roberta, O.S.U.

Mount Carmel Academy
Wichita, Kansas
Sister M. James Elmer

C.Y.O. of St. Anthony of Padua
Baltimore, Maryland
Rec. Robert Hiltz

Catholic Theatre Group
St. Peter's Parish
South Hadley Falls, Massachusetts
Madeleine Chretien, Sec'y.

St. Genesius Players
University of Detroit High School
Detroit, Michigan
Rev. Samuel J. Listermann, S.J.

Dominican High School
Detroit, Michigan
Sister Rose Terrence, O.P.

Thespians
St. Felix High School
Wabasha, Minnesota
Sister M. Henrita

St. Thomas Military Academy
St. Paul, Minnesota
Donald F. Meyers

Ursuline Academy
Kirkwood, Missouri
Peggy C. Zuraweste

St. Alphonsus Rock High School
St. Louis, Missouri
Sister Mary Albertus, S.S.N.D.

Sister M. Leandra, O.S.F.
St. Louis, Missouri

Maryville College of the Sacred Heart
St. Louis, Missouri

Carmelita F. Schmelig
St. Louis, Missouri

St. Joseph's Academy
St. Louis, Missouri
Carmelita Schmelig

Incarnate Word Academy
St. Louis, Missouri
Sister Joseph Alphonsus

Sister Mary Dorothy, S.S.N.D.
St. Francis Borgia High School
Washington, Missouri

Nerinx Hall High School
Webster Groves, Missouri
Rosemary Lough

The Creighton Players
Creighton University
Omaha, Nebraska
Rev. E. W. Youngren, S.J.

Seton Hall Preparatory School
South Orange, New Jersey
Rev. George Clausing

Sacred Hearts Players
New York, New York
Rev. John M. Brooks

Convent of the Sacred Heart
New York, New York
Mother B. Brennan, R.S.C.J.

Rev. Vincent Traynor, O.S.B.
St. Gregory High School
Shawnee, Oklahoma

Holy Family High School
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Sister St. Rita, C.D.P.

Cascia Hall
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Rev. A. J. LaFleur

Immaculate Conception Academy
Stephan, South Dakota
Sister M. Audrey

St. Joseph's Academy
Green Bay, Wisconsin
Sister M. Tarcisia

CONGRATULATIONS

In an annual national play picture contest, the second prize for the best photograph of an effective or climactic scene went to Sister Marion, S.S.N.D., then of St. Mary's High School, (Burlington, Wisconsin). Sister was also given an award of merit for a second picture which was entered in the "character studies" division.

Congratulations are also due Miss Mary Beecher of St. Michaels High School (Chicago) who won three awards for pictures in the same contest.



BROADWAY IN REVIEW

PETER PAN — Mary Martin's gaiety, this time, very literally takes wings; never has any Peter flown so high nor sung so many songs. The Indians and the Pirates, even the crocodile and Captain Hook (Cyril Ritchard) are all foolish and funny. Jerome Robbins' dances are better than the musical score but its a loveable and lively production. At the Winter Garden.

ON YOUR TOES — As a satire on Russian Ballet, its outdated but Bobby Van can really dance, so can Zorina; the songs have their old lilt and Balanchine's jazz ballet, "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" has everything — except Ray Bolger. At the Forty-sixth Street.

THE TRAVELING LADY — Horton Foote's new play has made a star of Kim Stanley, as the inarticulate heroic factory girl who comes with her little girl in search of her husband, just out of the 'Pen'. The people are so real in their weakness and their kindness that we count on Foote to write a great play. At the Playhouse.

THE RAINMAKER — Its ACT I of *What Every Woman Knows* dressed up as a "Western." Geraldine Page is the awkward girl for whom her brothers are trying to corral a husband. All is good fun except the romantic scenes which are dull. At the Cort.

QUADRILLE — Alfred Lunt with a beard and Lynn Fontanne with a bustle enact Noel Coward with decor by Cecil Beaton. Abetted by Brian Aherne, Edna Best and Brenda Forbes, a polit and rather artificial comedy is given not only the Lunts special brand of charm but even humanity. At the Coronet.

THE TENDER TRAP — The title of course means 'marriage' and is a satire about career girls in New York and how they feel towards an eligible bachelor. Amusing. At the Longacre.

FRAGILE FOX — Noisy drama about the Battle of the Bulge. No development of character but

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plenty of foul language. Revolves about a cowardly captain. At the Belasco.

SLIGHTLY DELINQUENT — Juvenile delinquency from the comedy angle of the latest techniques of social service and psychiatrics. Well cast and produced. At the Blackfriars.

I FEEL WONDERFUL — Very small revue short in both humor and charm. At the Theatre de Lys.

THE SANDS OF THE NEGEV — Translated from Hebrew this is the drama of the heroic defense of a small 'kibbutz' against the Egyptians. Very interesting. At the President.

FANNY — A very unusual and moving musicale which ends on a deathbed and whose prima donnas are two older men — Pinza and Slezak but its really Slezak's show. Condensed into two acts from Marcel Pagnol's trilogy of *Marseilles*, it relates rather breathlessly the frustrated love of Fanny for Marius and the generosity of Panisse. Harold Rome's music is closely integrated with the text in its appeal; Mielziner's decor is magical; Joshua Logan's direction and S. N. Behrman's script are full of sympathy for the very Gallic idiosyncrasies of Cesar and Panisse. At the Majestic.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST — Will be given five performances by the Carroll Players at the Carroll Club, New York in December.

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